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Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 XMB-04 ERDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FEAE-00 FPC-01 H-02
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 USIA-15
OES-07 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-10 /113 W
----------097921 271842Z /53
P R 271530Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4850
DEPT OF INTERIOR WASHDC

UNCLAS KINSHASA 7081

DEPT PASS EXIM

INTERIOR FOR BUREC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ENRG, CG
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF SUSPENSION OF WORK ON INGA-SHABA TRANSMISSION LINE

1. FOLLOWING MEMO EXPRESSES OPINION OF LOCAL REPS OF BUREC CONCERNING TECHNICAL EFFECTS OF A SUSPENSION OF WORK AND STORAGE OF MATERIALS FOR THE INGA-SHABA TRANSMISSION LINE.

BEGIN QUOTE
2. AS REQUESTED BY THE AMERICAN EMBASSY HERE, THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION HEREIN IS EXPRESSING AN OPINION ON THE EFFECTS OF A SHUTDOWN AND THE STORAGE OF INGA-SHABA MATERIALS, SUPPLIES AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME. THE OPINION EXPRESSED IS THE MOST EXPERT WE CAN MAKE WITH THE BACK-GROUND AND EXPERIENCE AVAILABLE IN OUR TEAM OF TECHNICAL ADVISORS HERE, AND IT ATTEMPTS TO EVALUATE FAIRLY ALL OF THE LOCAL ADVERSE CONDITIONS WITH WHICH WE ARE INTIMATELY FAMILIAR. WE HAVE BEEN REQUESTED TO PRESENT THIS IN LAYMAN'S TERMS, AND
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WILL DO SO. WE ARE WILLING TO BE MORE DETAILED OR SPECIFIC OR TECHNICAL, IF DESIRED.

3. AT THIS TIME THE INGA-SHABA PROJECT IN ZAIRE HAS MANY MILLIONS OF DOLLARS INVESTED IN ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT WHICH WILL BE SUBJECT TO DETERIORATION AND POSSIBLE LOSS IF STORED IN-CORRECTLY FOR A TIME PERIOD OF TWO TO FIVE YEARS. MORE EQUIP-

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MENT OF THIS NATURE IS ALSO STILL ENROUTE TO ZAIRE OR IN WARE-
HOUSE FACILITIES IN SWEDEN. NEARLY ALL OF THIS MATERIAL ARRIVES
IN ZAIRE AS SEPARATE COMPONENT PARTS AND UNTIL THESE ARE
SECURELY SUPPORTED BY CONCRETE PADS OR INSTALLED IN THE
CONTROLLED ATMOSPHERE STRUCTURES, ASSEMBLED AND IN MANY CASES
FILLED WITH SPECIALLY PROCESSED ELECTRICAL INSULATING OIL, THE
RISK OF DAMAGE FROM INTERNAL RUSTING OR MOIST AIR BEING ABSORBED
BY SENSITIVE ELECTRICAL INSULATION IS GREAT. WEATHERING OF
THE NORMALLY EXPOSED PAINTED SURFACES IS NOT CONSIDERED A
PROBLEM.

4. OTHER ITEMS, IN PARTICULAR PORTIONS OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS,
CONTROL AND PROTECTION SYSTEMS, HAVE INTERNAL COMPONENTS WHICH
HAVE SHELF LIFE CHARACTER AND TIME ALONE WILL PRODUCE A NEED
FOR MAINTENANCE BEFORE THESE MAY BE PLACED IN SERVICE. IN THIS
MANNER THEY RESEMBLE A COLOR TELEVISION SET BOTH IN
CHARACTERISTICS AND INTERNAL COMPONENTS. FURTHER, THESE ITEMS
ARE DESIGNED AND CONSTRUCTED FOR USE IN A ROOM WHERE HEAT, COLD
AND DUST ARE CONTROLLED TO ASSURE A NORMAL LIFE SPAN.

5. ALL THE AFOREMENTIONED DEVICES WERE PREPARED FOR SHIPMENT BY
THE MANUFACTURERS AND ARRIVED IN ZAIRE WITH A PROTECTIVE DRY AIR
BLANKET, UNDER VACUUM OR WITH OTHER SHORT-TIME PROTECTIONS.
THE LIFE OF THESE PROTECTIONS IS NOW BEING EXCEEDED IN SOME
INSTANCES. AT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE MANUFACTURERS AND IN
SOME CASES AIDED BY HIS REPRESENTATIVE, THE MATERIALS ARE BEING
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INSPECTED AND AS POSSIBLE THE SHORT-TIME PROTECTIONS RE-
CONDITIONED. THIS IS NOT AN ADEQUATE PREPARATION FOR LONG-TERM
STORAGE.

6. LONG-TERM STORAGE WILL DEMAND THE PROTECTION OF OIL-FILLED
DEVICES. THIS IS DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE UNDER PRESENT CIRCUM-
STANCES DUE TO THEIR WEIGHT WHEN FILLED WITH OIL.

7. NOT ONLY IS THE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT ENDANGERED BUT THE
TRANSMISSION LINE IS ALSO. THE LINE IS 1700 KILOMETERS LONG
THROUGH UNDEVELOPED AND IMPASSABLE AREAS, EXCEPT FOR THE CAMPS
AND ACCESS AS DEVELOPED FOR THE PROJECT. WITHOUT MAINTENANCE
THE ROADS WILL WASH OUT, MAKING THE AREAS INACCESSIBLE; AND
WITHOUT CLEAN UP AROUND THE CAMPS AND MATERIALS YARDS, WE STAND
A VERY GOOD CHANCE OF LOSING MUCH OF IT TO GRASS FIRES OR THE
ELEMENTS.

8. EQUIPMENT DETERIORATION: PARKED EQUIPMENT WOULD LOSE
TIRES, BATTERIES, UPHOLSTERY, ETC. AS WELL AS RUST THROUGH THE
BODIES IN A SHORT TIME BECAUSE OF TROPICAL CONDITIONS.

9. CONSTRUCTION FORM WORK (FOR PLACEMENT OF CONCRETE) IS

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ALREADY DETERIORATING TO THE POINT WHERE IT WILL BE NECESSARY
TO REWORK IT BEFORE IT CAN BE USED. A FEW MORE MONTHS AND IT WILL
REQUIRE REPLACEMENT.

10. MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT COULD BE
LOST IN PROLONGED STORAGE BECAUSE OF CORROSION, MOISTURE SEEPING
INTO THE ELECTRICAL INSULATION, RUST, AND MANY OTHER CAUSES.
THIS EQUIPMENT IS DESIGNED TO OPERATE AND NOT TO BE STORED.
WHEN OPERATING, IT IS HOT ENOUGH TO KEEP DRY. WHEN IT IS
NOT OPERATING, IN THIS TROPICAL CLIMATE IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE
TO KEEP DRY, AND MOISTURE CAN RUIN IT VERY QUICKLY.

11. IN OUR OPINION ANY SHUTDOWN OF THE JOB WOULD BE DELETERIOUS
TO THE PROJECT. WE RECOMMEND AS STRONGLY AS POSSIBLE ON
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TECHNICAL GROUNDS, THAT THE PROJECT BE CONTINUED IMMEDIATELY.
THERE IS A GOOD POSSIBILITY THAT EXTENSIVE EQUIPMENT DAMAGE
COULD RESULT WITH A PROLONGED SHUTDOWN. END QUOTE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PROGRAMS (PROJECTS), POWER TRANSMISSION LINES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: KINSHASA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770715/aaaaamgj.tel
Line Count: 140
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 83008663-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1736917
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF SUSPENSION OF WORK ON INGA-SHABA TRANSMISSION LINE
TAGS: ENRG, EINV, CG, INGA SHABA
To: STATE INT
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/83008663-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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